

Frequently Asked Questions: Apartment Property Trespassing Problems

Q: I manage an apartment complex and have a problem with a chronic trespasser on the property. I have told the trespasser he is not welcome on the property at any time – can I file a Trespass Authorization Letter, and if not, what can I do?

A: The Trespass Authorization Letter is designed for properties that are “closed to the public” and the process is not suited for situations where an officer has to determine whether the trespassing party has been invited or not. Police officers in this situation are unable to independently verify whether the trespass is criminal in nature and therefore the trespass authorization cannot be used here.

However, you always have the right to ask anyone to leave your private property. If you are a property manager who has a problem trespasser on your property, ask the person to leave the premises. Tell the person you are going to call the police if the person does not leave. If the person still refuses to leave the premises, you can call the police non-emergency number (619-691-5151) for assistance.

- Please also consider controlling access to the apartment complex with 6-foot wrought iron fencing and pedestrian/vehicle gates. Fencing that bends outwards at the top or has pointed tips can be especially effective. If you would like to erect fencing on your property, this webpage provides more details on city requirements and the permitting process: [Development Services](#).
- We also recommend posting your property with signage that indicates the complex is closed to the general public – with the exception of residents and their accompanied guests.

Q: What should a No Trespassing sign at apartment complex include?

A: For a sample sign, [click here](#).

Q: What can I do if there is a specific person who continually causes problems at my property?

A: The Trespass Authorization Letter is not designed for use against a specific party – it is intended to be enforced against any and every trespassing person.

Regardless, you should document all the problems this person is causing at your property as it could be helpful in a criminal or civil lawsuit.

You may also consider filing a civil restraining order against the person if he or she is harassing or threatening you. Please see this link for information regarding this process: [San Diego Superior Court](#)

Q: Do you have any additional tips on keeping unwanted people off the grounds of an apartment complex?

A: Yes. This article discusses a variety of ways to keep unwanted and problem people out of apartment complexes: [Crime Doctor](#)

Q: I still have questions - who should I contact?

A: Please contact [Karin Schmerler](#).